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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 004095

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [PREL](#) [TU](#) [AF](#) [FR](#) [NATO](#)

SUBJECT: ISAF: TURKEY AND FRANCE WORKING OUT SHARED COMMAND
OF MNB-CENTER

REF: A. ANKARA 3413

[1](#)B. KOENIG-BETTS EMAIL 6/29/05

Classified By: Counselor for Political-Military Affairs Timothy A. Bett
s for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) On July 13, PolMilOff called on TGS J3 NATO Branch Chief COL Halit Yilmaz to discuss Turkey's plans to contribute to security in Afghanistan after its ISAF VII command ends next month (see ref a). Yilmaz confirmed that the Turkish and French militaries are working on a formula for how to share command of the planned Multinational Brigade-Center (MNB-C), currently anticipated to commence with Phase III of ISAF in 2006 (ref b). (NOTE: PolMilOff explained that Washington was still considering whether we prefer that MNB-C commence with Phase III or Phase IV; Yilmaz responded that he understood. END NOTE.) Yilmaz said the French had yet to take a final political decision on offering to command (or co-command) MNB-C; he understood Paris would do so July 20.

[1](#)2. (C) Yilmaz did not provide great detail on the nature of the planning thus far. It was likely, he said, that the country command would rotate every six months or perhaps annually. He believed neither the French nor the Turks would draw down significantly when not in command. Afghanistan is far away, he said, and it would be too costly to draw down and ramp up frequently.
MCELDOWNEY